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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/974,898	10/12/2001	Kunihiro Miichi	O3020.0279/P279	8944
24998	7590	03/13/2006	EXAMINER	
DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN & OSHINSKY LLP			LAROSE, COLIN M	
2101 L Street, NW			ART UNIT	
Washington, DC 20037			PAPER NUMBER	

2627

DATE MAILED: 03/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/974,898

Applicant(s)

MIICHI ET AL.

Examiner

Colin M. LaRose

Art Unit

2627

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,17-27 and 29-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2,17-27 and 29-39 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 8 December 2005 has been entered.

Response to Amendments and Arguments

2. Applicant's amendments to claims 2 and 17 are sufficient to overcome the cited prior art and are therefore allowed.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: "with" should be inserted between "image" and "said" in line 13. Appropriate correction is required.

4. The following sections of 37 CFR §1.75(a) and (d)(1) are the basis of the following objection:

(a) The specification must conclude with a claim particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention or discovery.

(d)(1) The claim or claims must conform to the invention as set forth in the remainder of the specification and the terms and phrases used in the claims must find clear support or antecedent basis in the description so that the meaning of the terms in the claims may be ascertainable by reference to the description.

5. Claim 1 is objected to under 37 CFR §1.75(a) and (d)(1) as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that the applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 1, “a prior acquired image” in line 12 appears to refer back to the “a plurality of acquired images prior to the pressing of a check start button,” and therefore should be rewritten as e.g. -- one of the prior acquired images --. Clarification and/or correction is required.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claim 1 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the claim objections set forth in this Office action.

The following is a statement of reasons for allowance of claim 1: Neither Seeley, Burt, nor any of the cited references discloses or suggests acquiring a plurality of acquired images “prior to the pressing of a check start button,” and then “acquiring at least one acquired image ... after the pressing of said check start button.” Nor do they disclose comparing at least one of the images acquired after the pressing of the check start button with at least one registration image to determine if there is a match, as claimed, and then comparing at least one registration image to at least one image acquired before the pressing of the check start button when there is no match, as claimed.

7. Claims 2 and 24-27 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for allowance: Neither Seeley, Burt, nor any of the cited references discloses or suggests acquiring a plurality of acquired images prior to the

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“pressing of a check start button,” and then “comparing at least one acquired image with at least one registration image” after the pressing of said check start button. Nor do they disclose repeating the comparing of another acquired image “captured prior the pressing of the check start button” with at least one registration image if the first comparison indicates no match, as claimed.

8. Claim 17-23 are allowed for substantially the same reasons as claims 1.
9. Claims 29-39 are allowed for substantially the same reasons as claims 1.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Colin M. LaRose whose telephone number is (571) 272-7423. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jingge Wu, can be reached on (571) 272-7429. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the TC 2600 Customer Service Office whose telephone number is (571) 272-2600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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Colin LaRose
Group Art Unit 2627
6 March 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin LaRose', written over the printed name.